AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior version, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing Of All Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

generating packets of content data to be broadcast from a content provider system via a network wherein the packets of content data include metadata describing the content data;

composing a playlist designating an order in which said packets of content are to be broadcast;

composing a transmission of said packets of content data based on said playlist; and

executing said transmission of said packets of content data according to said playlist and a transmission policy, wherein the transmission policy is based on a playout policy and one or more network resources that are available for said transmission, wherein the playout policy is a list of protocol-neutral and protocol-specific transmission settings, and wherein the protocol-specific transmission settings are specific to a protocol used by a transmission execution process.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said generating packets of content data and said composing a playlist are performed by the content provider system.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said composing a transmission and executing said transmission are performed by a broadcast system head-end.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said metadata comprises Extensible Markup Language (XML) tags.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said metadata comprises pre-show content discovery information.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said metadata comprises real-time content discovery information.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said generating packets of content data comprises:
gathering content to be broadcast from a content cache on the content provider system;
separating said content into packages and package elements within the packages;
assigning each package and package element a unique identifier;
storing said packages in a package cache;
assigning metadata tags identifying content within the packages and package elements to the packages and package elements; and
marking tagged packages as ready for inclusion in playlists.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein said composing a playlist comprises:

grouping all related packages into content groups;

encapsulating content groups into a playlist; and

passing the playlist to a transmission composition process.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising concatenating two or more portions of metadata in the playlist prior to passing the playlist to a transmission composition process to generate metadata representing the entire playlist.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said encapsulating content groups into a playlist further comprises encapsulating said content groups into a Motion Picture Experts Group-2 (MPEG-2) multiplex.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said composing a transmission comprises:

selecting a playlist for scheduling;

defining playout policy parameters;

determining bandwidth required to transmit the playlist;

determining transmission policy parameters based on the bandwidth required to transmit the playlist and the playout policy parameters;

assigning network resources to the playlist based on the transmission policy;

caching the transmission as active and scheduled.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said executing said transmission comprises:

reading a previously generated transmission;

loading transmission policy parameters;

encoding announcement data for each content package into an announcement data stream describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission;

encoding metadata for each content package into a metadata stream providing a description of content within a content stream;

sending pre-show content discovery information describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission; and

sending announcement, metadata and content data streams according to a predefined timeslot format.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising:

receiving said packets of content data at a receiver connected with said content provider system via said network; and

selectively caching or presenting the packets based on a comparison of the metadata describing the content data and user profile information stored on the receiver,

wherein said receiving said packets of content data comprises:

reading the announcement data stream;

finding a predetermined metadata Uniform Resource Locator (URL) in the announcement data stream identifying a location of the metadata stream;

decoding the metadata stream identified by the predetermined metadata URL;

correlating metadata from the decoded metadata stream to user profile information stored within the receiver;

preparing cache space adequate to store content that has metadata matching the user profile information; and

caching packages with metadata highly correlated with the filtering criteria.

14. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

a content provider system to generate packets of content data to be broadcast from the content provider system via a first network connected with the content provider system wherein the packets of content data include metadata describing the content data and compose a playlist designating an order in which said packets of content are to be broadcast; and

a broadcast system head-end connected with said content provider system via said first network to receive said packets of content data and said playlist, compose a transmission of said packets of content data based on said playlist, and execute said transmission of said packets of content data according to said playlist and a transmission policy, wherein the transmission policy is based on a playout policy and one or more network resources that are available for said transmission, wherein the playout policy is a list of protocol-neutral and protocol-specific transmission settings, and wherein the protocol-specific transmission settings are specific to a protocol used by a transmission execution process.

15. (Original) The system of claim of claim 14, wherein said content provider system:

gathers content to be broadcast from a content cache on the content provider system;

separates said content into packages and package elements within the packages;

assigns each package and package element a unique identifier;

stores said packages in a package cache;

assigns metadata tags identifying content within the packages and package elements to the packages and package elements; and

marks tagged packages as ready for inclusion in playlists.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein said content provider system:

groups all related packages into content groups;

encapsulates content groups into a playlist; and

passes the playlist to a transmission composition process.

17. (Original) The system of claim 16, content provider system further concatenates two or more portions of metadata in the playlist prior to passing the playlist to a transmission composition process to generate metadata representing the entire playlist.

18. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein said broadcast system head-end:

selects a playlist for scheduling;

defines playout policy parameters;

determines bandwidth required to transmit the playlist;

determines transmission policy parameters based on the bandwidth required to transmit the playlist and the playout policy parameters;

assigns network resources to the playlist based on the transmission policy;

caching the transmission as active and scheduled.

19. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein said broadcast system head-end:

reads a previously generated transmission;

loads transmission policy parameters;

encodes announcement data for each content package into an announcement data stream describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission;

encodes metadata for each content package into a metadata stream providing a description of content within a content stream;

sends pre-show content discovery information describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission; and

sends announcement, metadata and content data streams according to a predefined timeslot format.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, further comprising:

a receiver connected with said broadcast system head-end via a second network to receive said packets of content data and selectively cache or present the packets based on a comparison of the metadata describing the content data and user profile information stored on the receiver, wherein said receiver:

reads the announcement data stream;

finds a predetermined metadata Uniform Resource Locator (URL) in the announcement data stream identifying a location of the metadata stream;

decodes the metadata stream identified by the predetermined metadata URL;

correlates metadata from the decoded metadata stream to user profile information stored within the receiver;

prepares cache space adequate to store content that has metadata matching the user profile information; and

caches packages with metadata highly correlated with the filtering criteria.

21. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

generate packets of content data to be broadcast from a content provider system via a network wherein the packets of content data include metadata describing the content data,

compose a playlist designating an order in which said packets of content are to be broadcast;

compose a transmission of said packets of content data based on said playlist; and

execute said transmission of said packets of content data according to said playlist and a transmission policy, wherein the transmission policy is based on a playout policy and one or more network resources that are available for said transmission, wherein the playout policy is a list of protocol-neutral and protocol-specific transmission settings, and wherein the protocol-specific transmission settings are specific to a protocol used by a transmission execution process.

22. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said generating packets of content data and said composing a playlist are performed by the content provider system.

23. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said composing a transmission and executing said transmission are performed by a broadcast system head-end.

24. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said metadata comprises Extensible Markup Language (XML) tags.

25. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said metadata comprises pre-show content discovery information.

26. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said metadata comprises real-time content discovery information.

27. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said generating packets of content data comprises:

gathering content to be broadcast from a content cache on the content provider system;

separating said content into packages and package elements within the packages;

assigning each package and package element a unique identifier;

storing said packages in a package cache;

assigning metadata tags identifying content within the packages and package elements to the packages and package elements; and

marking tagged packages as ready for inclusion in playlists.

28. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 27, wherein said composing a playlist comprises:

grouping all related packages into content groups;

encapsulating content groups into a playlist; and

passing the playlist to a transmission composition process.

29. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 28, further comprising concatenating two or more portions of metadata in the playlist prior to passing the playlist to a transmission composition process to generate metadata representing the entire playlist.

30. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 21, wherein said composing a transmission comprises:

selecting a playlist for scheduling;

defining playout policy parameters;

determining bandwidth required to transmit the playlist;

determining transmission policy parameters based on the bandwidth required to transmit the playlist and the playout policy parameters;

assigning network resources to the playlist based on the transmission policy;

caching the transmission as active and scheduled.

31. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 28, wherein said executing said transmission comprises:

reading a previously generated transmission;

loading transmission policy parameters;

encoding announcement data for each content package into an announcement data stream describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission;

encoding metadata for each content package into a metadata stream providing a description of content within a content stream;

sending pre-show content discovery information describing a schedule of content to be broadcast during execution of the transmission; and

sending announcement, metadata and content data streams according to a predefined timeslot format.

32. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 31, further comprising:

receive said packets of content data at a receiver connected with said content provider system via said network; and

selectively cache or present the packets based on a comparison of the metadata describing the content data and user profile information stored on the receiver, wherein said receiving said packets of content data comprises:

reading the announcement data stream;

finding a predetermined metadata Uniform Resource Locator (URL) in the announcement data stream identifying a location of the metadata stream;

decoding a metadata stream identified by the predetermined metadata URL;

correlating metadata from the decoded metadata stream to user profile information stored within the receiver;

preparing cache space adequate to store content that has metadata matching the user profile information; and

caching packages with metadata highly correlated with the filtering criteria.